

pamphlet form as their work, over their name, such monographs as they may prepare." The plan commends itself to us as a good one, and with proper precautions likely to result in effective work in this division. One investigation, in which almost all botanists can assist, is the contemplated series of phenological observations. Blanks (and further information) can doubtless be obtained by any of our subscribers who will express a desire for them.

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## OPEN LETTERS.

### Seeds of *Mentzelia*.

Can any botanist send me seeds of *Mentzelia ornata*, in good condition for germination?

JOHN M. COULTER.

*Crawfordsville, Ind.*

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### Liquid Glue for mounting plants, etc.

Glue, half pound; acetic acid, half pint. Break the glue into small pieces, put it into the acid and set it on the back part of the stove for a few hours, and then it is always ready for use. Cork it up in a bottle and it will keep any length of time. Good to put the back on books, etc.

*Paola, Kan.*

DR. J. H. OYSTER.

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### Arrangement of Herbaria, etc.

Professor Beal's inquiry in the April GAZETTE prompts the following reflections:

After a trial of both plans, I have come to use the alphabetical arrangement of genera and species, arranging the orders according to Bentham and Hooker. To facilitate the arrangement in the approved sequence, whenever this becomes temporarily necessary for any order, I pencil the number of both order and genus under the name on the genus-cover, following the *Genera Plantarum*, thus cc. 4. This arrangement is followed in cryptogams, as well as phænogams, though the numbering is obviously impossible with the former.

An alphabetical or numerical sequence is at best a compromise, for convenience of reference. In an herbarium it is less objectionable than when applied to notes and references. Some eight years ago, when I began an extensive specific subject-index in certain branches of botany, I arranged my cards alphabetically. There is no question but those referring to a given genus are found most readily with this arrangement, but this is not all of the story. In studying the pollination or other biological features of a genus, or the fungi that attack it, it is always necessary to consult the slips on related genera. With the *Genera Plantarum* before us, we can pick them out, in an alphabetical index, but it is far better to find them in proper sequence, and as rapidly as possible my cards are being arranged according to the natural system. With the experience of Dr. Gray, I am not at all sure that I shall not wish my genus covers were similarly arranged, as his are. However, the task of rearranging them is less onerous than that of rearranging a large index.

A word as to exsiccatae. Some time since Professor Bessey stated in the *Naturalist* that such collections of fungi as Ellis, Roumeguère and Winter are best divided and the species distributed where they belong, in the herbarium. I think this will ultimately prove a source of annoyance to those who try it, for without a perfect system of cross-references the species of some groups will soon become inaccessible in consequence of the frequent removals they experience from genus to genus in this changeable group. With occasional indexes